

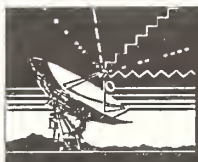
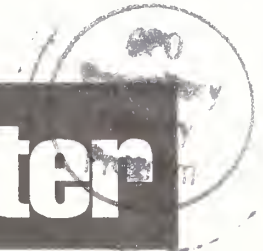
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# Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2682

October 7, 1994

**USDA REORGANIZATION PASSED BY CONGRESS** -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced October 5 that an historic plan to reorganize and streamline the USDA has been approved by Congress. The USDA reorganization will save \$2.5 billion, close 1,100 field offices, reduce staff by at least 7,500 and eliminate 14 of the 43 USDA agencies. Secretary Espy said, "I pledged when I took this position that one of my first priorities would be a total restructuring of USDA. I am pleased that Congress has passed the necessary legislation which will allow us to move the Department into the 21st Century." Espy stressed that the \$2.5 billion in savings as a result of reorganization will come from office closings and streamlining of USDA in Washington, not out of the programs run by USDA. "The new reinvented USDA will work better, cost less and improve service to our customers," Espy said. **Contact: Jim Loftus (202) 720-4623.**

**SECRETARY ESPY RESIGNS** -- On October 3, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced his resignation to President Clinton effective December 31. Espy had received word that day that the bill authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to reorganize USDA had passed the House of Representatives. Espy said, "As we stand at this new beginning for USDA, I stand at a new beginning for myself as well. I must personally overcome the challenge to my good name that continues to distract from my work at USDA." Secretary Espy said, "I have many people to thank and I will in the months ahead. I thank the President for the opportunity to serve, I thank the people of American agriculture who have given me their support and encouragement as I worked to bring change to USDA. I now owe it to myself and my family to turn my full attention to defending myself. I look forward to dedicating myself to vigorously answering the charges that have been made." **Contact: Ali Webb (202) 720-4623.**

**MASSIVE REFORM OF CROP INSURANCE** -- Both the House and Senate passed legislation this week (October 3 & 4), overhauling the way the Department of Agriculture responds when crop disasters strike America's farmers and ranchers. Both actions pave the way for President Clinton's signature. As a result of the legislation, crop insurance will become an integral part of most USDA farm programs. Most notably, farmers must buy crop insurance to be eligible for other farm benefits, including commodity price support and certain Farmers Home Administration loans. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said, "Farmers must be assured that adequate, affordable and effective crop insurance is as guaranteed as the next disaster. That promise has been kept." **Contact: Paula Thomasson (202) 254-9344.**

**CROP INSURANCE DATE EXTENDED** -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy announced the extension of the sales closing date for crop insurance from September 30 to October 31. This action gives producers an additional 30 days to purchase insurance policies for such crops as winter wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, rye, sugarcane and nursery stock. Farmers should contact their crop insurance agents to determine if they are affected by the action and to discuss their options. **Contact: Paula Thomasson (202) 254-9344.**

**USDA AWARDS \$10 MILLION IN RURAL GRANTS** -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy announced September 29, \$10 million in grants to 33 education and medical organizations in 28 states that help jump-start the development and deployment of advanced telecommunications services throughout rural America. Espy said, "This advanced telecommunications technology will help bring rural America access to the Information Superhighway which is critical for their ability to survive, compete, and prosper." The grants administered by USDA's Rural Electrification Administration will be used to link education and health services from one rural area to another and to more populated sites. The grants were made under REA's Distance Learning and Medical Link Grant Program and varied from \$63,711 to \$490,000, including 20 of \$300,000 or more. Recipients ranged from a school district-cable company partnership to a community college's educational-medical network. **Contact: Jim Brownlee (202) 720-2091.**

**BEETLES CONTROL WEEDS THAT CHEMICALS CAN'T** -- Tiny insects that love to eat leafy spurge weeds are gradually bringing some relief to farmers and ranchers in the northern Great Plains, according to a USDA researcher who releases the six-legged weed whackers. Chemical weed killers are generally impractical and too expensive for leafy spurge weeds so scientists are fighting back with several *Aphthona* species and other insects from overseas. Norman E. Rees, USDA's Agricultural Research Service entomologist, says about 500 *Aphthona nigriscutis* flea beetles were released at a site in central Montana in 1989 and have multiplied and practically eliminated leafy spurge from an area now about 500 yards across. Rees said, "We expect flea beetles to continue to free up more rangeland for wildlife and livestock every year. **Contact: Dennis Senft (510) 559-6068.**

**NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS BOARD TO MEET** -- USDA's National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) will meet October 11-14 in Rohnert Park, CA. All sessions are open to the public and will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day at the Red Lion Hotel, 1 Red Lion Drive. The main focus of the meeting is to discuss materials being considered for placement on the national list of allowed synthetics and prohibited natural substances for use in the production and processing of organic foods. A public input session is scheduled for Tuesday, October 11, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. **Contact: Connie Crunkleton (202) 720-8998.**

**USDA ANNOUNCES 1995 FEED GRAINS PROGRAM PROVISIONS** -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy announced September 30, the 1995 Acreage Reduction Program acreage reduction percentages (ARPs) of 7.5 percent for corn, up from the zero-percent level in 1994, while maintaining zero percent for grain sorghum, barley and oats. Corn stocks going into the 1995/1996 marketing year are expected to be about 777 million bushels higher than the previous year's stocks. This year's ARP levels for grain sorghum, barley and oats are unchanged from 1994. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

**1994 MEAT IMPORTS TO BE BELOW TRIGGER LEVEL** -- USDA's fourth quarterly estimate of meat imports under the Meat Import Act is 1,218.8 million pounds for 1994. This estimate of imports is the same as previous quarterly estimates for 1994 because of voluntary restraint agreements signed with Australia and New Zealand for this calendar year. The estimate of imports is just below the trigger level of 1,218.9 million pounds at which import quotas would be required under the Act's provisions. Australia and New Zealand have signed voluntary restraint agreements allowing the U.S. to limit their imports of meat items subject to the law in 1994 to 664.9 and 406.6 million pounds, respectively. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy said, "These agreements should keep total 1994 imports of beef below the trigger level." **Contact: Donald Washington (202) 720-3101.**



## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA # 1949** -- In this edition, Brenda Curtis-Heiken describes how urban sprawl is affecting one county's farm operations. (Weekly cassette -- 13-1/2 minute documentary).

**CONSUMER TIME # 1430** -- Putting trees and shrubs to bed; wildfire prevention; "Lion King" characters to help USDA; high tech grants to rural America; talking to "TJ." (Weekly cassette - 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features).

**AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1940** -- Espy to resign; NAFTA study shows increase in U.S. farm exports; USDA will reorganize; '95 feed grain provisions; mite protection for bees. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE.** These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Tuesday, October 18, weekly weather and crop outlook; Wednesday, October 19, wheat report; Asian and Pacific Rim outlook; Thursday, October 20, catfish processing and agricultural outlook report; Friday, October 21, cattle on feed report; dairy outlook report; livestock, dairy and poultry outlook report.

**USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**

**COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545**

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

**FEATURES** -- Patrick O'Leary reports on six foot soybeans, an experimental forage crop being developed by USDA researchers; Chris Larson reports on "Adopt A Watershed," a program from USDA's Soil Conservation Service.

**ACTUALITIES** -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy resigns (excerpts from his October 3 news conference).

**UPCOMING FEATURES** -- Patrick O'Leary reports on a prototype mechanical harvester for blueberries developed by USDA researchers.

## SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

*Galaxy 7, Transponder 9, Channel 9, Audio 6.2 or 6.8, Downlink frequency 3880 Mhz.  
Available on Thursdays 3:45 - 4:00 p.m., EDT; Mondays 11:00 - 11:15 a.m., EDT.*

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.  
Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

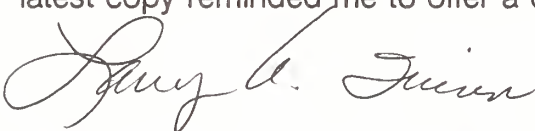
## OFF MIKE

**MEDFLIES THREATEN CROPS**...in California. **Walt Shaw** (KHTK, Sacramento, CA) reports that medflies have been found north of Los Angeles in Ventura County for the first time. An infestation of those tiny insects could be devastating to such crops as lemons, strawberries, oranges, avocados, grapefruit and peppers -- all grown in that county. California is selling a lot of rice in export markets to customers like Japan this year. As a result, their rice production has nearly doubled as result of this increased demand for American rice. Walt broadcasts agricultural news an hour every morning and does two-minute farm updates six times a day. He'll be hosting the 1997 Western/Southwestern Regional Meeting of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters to be held in Monterey, CA.

**AG BREAK**...is the name of a five-times-per-week, 2 1/2-minute TV feature carried by **KBIM-TV** (Roswell, NM) at 6:07 a.m. **Jaccii Farris** saw our TV listings in a recent issue and called to inquire about our features. She said New Mexico State University also provides feature stories for their use on a regular basis. (See page 3 if you would like to downlink satellite-delivered stories on Mondays and Thursdays).

**FAX DELIVERY**...of this newsletter is available through AgNewsFAX and **Mike Rogers** (Michigan Farm Bureau) regularly reads the letter this way. Mike reports that he finds our information useful in preparing a regular agricultural radio show that he produces for WJR Radio in Detroit, MI. You can receive the letter on the issue date (each Friday) by calling AgNewsFAX at **(202) 690-3944**.

**HOW TO GET INFORMATION**...from USDA is a listing of information contacts which has just been updated and reprinted. A call from **Bob Quinn** (WHO, Des Moines, IA) requesting the latest copy reminded me to offer a copy to anyone who will FAX or write us.



**LARRY A. QUINN, Director**  
Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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